

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Executive Calendar No. 237, the nomination of Thomas Dorr to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development:

Bill Frist, Thad Cochran, Saxby Chambliss, Rick Santorum, Norm Coleman, Craig Thomas, Jeff Sessions, Pat Roberts, Kay Bailey Hutchison, George V. Voinovich, Charles Grassley, Wayne Allard, Michael B. Enzi, Elizabeth Dole, John E. Sununu, Sam Brownback, John Warner.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Executive Calendar No. 238, the nomination of Thomas C. Dorr, of Iowa, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Commodity Credit Corporation:

Bill Frist, Thad Cochran, Norm Coleman, Charles Grassley, Wayne Allard, Jim Bunning, Conrad Burns, Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Larry Craig, Richard G. Lugar, Peter Fitzgerald, George Allen, Don Nickles, John Ensign, James M. Inhofe.

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to the consideration of the following nomination on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar No. 461. I further ask unanimous consent that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nomination was considered and confirmed as follows:

Zalmay Khalilzad, of Maryland, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to Legislative Session.

#### ADOPTION INCENTIVES REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2003

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3182 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title. The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3182) to reauthorize the adoption incentive payments program under part E of title IV of the Social Security Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today, the Senate is taking bipartisan action to pass the Adoption Promotion Act of 2003, which will extend and improve the adoption bonuses created as part of the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act. For many years, the Senate has taken a bipartisan approach to adoption and child welfare policy. I am very proud to be one of the lead advocates for this legislation that rewards states which promote adoption and invest in child welfare.

Throughout this year, a bipartisan group, led by Finance Chairman GRASSLEY met to forge consensus on extending the adoption incentives, and doing more to focus attention on the needs of older children. President Bush highlighted the need to do more to promote adoptions for children nine years old or older, and Congress agreed. The list of cosponsors, including Senators LANDRIEU, BUNNING, CRAIG, BAUCUS, DEWINE, LEVIN, INHOFE, NELSON, LINCOLN, CLINTON, and JEFFORDS, demonstrates the broad coalition that can be achieved when we take a bipartisan approach.

As I noted, our legislation builds on the foundation set with the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act. Since its passage, adoptions from foster care have nearly doubled nationwide and over 900 West Virginia children have a permanent home. By extending and expanding this law, we hope to continue to promote permanent homes, and place a new focus on older children.

Despite our success in recent years, across this nation 126,000 children are waiting to be adopted. Children over the age of 9 represent almost half of the children awaiting adoption yet these children spend the most time in the system and have a difficult time finding permanent homes. The Adoption Promotion Act of 2003 will especially help these children by offering incentives to states that successfully place older children in adoptive homes.

This bill rewards states for moving children into permanent homes from the foster care system and further rewards states for moving special needs, and older children from foster care to permanent placements. This bill is particularly important for my state. In West Virginia, over 70 percent of the children in foster care are over age 9. This act will help older children find much needed, permanent homes.

This legislation is a positive way we can strengthen our child welfare system, but we also know that more must be done to help vulnerable children. The bipartisan spirit that helped ensure this legislation passage is the same spirit needed to deal with the rest of the child welfare system as we continue to push the basic goal of a child's health and safety being paramount, and every child finding a permanent home.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I rise today in support of H.R.

3182, legislation to reauthorize the adoption incentive program. I would like to thank Senator GRASSLEY for his leadership on this issue. He has been a friend to American families for his entire tenure in this body and his work has made it even easier for more families to come together through adoption.

As an adoptive parent myself, I know firsthand how adoption can complete a family and how it can give new beginnings to both adoptive parents and children. And as a member of the Adoption Caucus, I have worked to make it easier for other families to experience the joy my family did through adoption.

This legislation will help that process by removing financial obstacles to adopting a child. As anyone who has been through an adoption knows, it can often be a very long, expensive process and for some families; the costs are so high as to be prohibitive. This legislation will help ensure that a family is not prevented from adopting a child simply because of the high costs involved.

The Adoption Incentives Program has already had been a tremendous success. Now this reauthorized and amended version of the program can help even more children and families for years to come. I stand wholeheartedly behind the goals of this bill and I look forward to working with Senator GRASSLEY on this issue again in the future.

#### ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, first I want to thank Senator GRASSLEY for the leadership that he has shown in addressing the needs of abused and neglected children. Together with Senator LANDRIEU and Senator BUNNING, Senator GRASSLEY has worked tirelessly and I know that this work comes from the heart. It is not an issue that gets in the headlines unless something goes wrong. It's an issue that one champions only because he or she cares. I also want to acknowledge the longstanding commitment of my friend Senator ROCKEFELLER who is well known as the greatest ally of needy children in this esteemed body.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I too want to thank Senator LANDRIEU, and I would like to recognize Senator BUNNING's efforts on this legislation.

Today we are passing the Adoption Incentives Reauthorization Act of 2003. It is particularly appropriate that we are doing so during National Adoption Month. Since the original Adoption Incentives Act was passed in 1997, the number of adoptions has doubled in 33 states. I am proud of this achievement and pleased that we are today continuing the authorization of this effective program.

Mrs. CLINTON. I too am pleased to reach this milestone. When my husband and I worked to establish the program in 1997, we hoped that this program would become half the success that it has. My husband set a goal of